

A Faithful Narrative

OF THE

Wonderful and Extraordinary FITS

WHICH

Mr. Tho. Spatchet

(Late of *Dunwich* and *Cookly*) was under by

WITCHCRAFT:

O R,

A Mysterious Providence in his  
even Unparallel'd Fits.

With an Account of his first Falling into, Beha-  
viour under, and (in part) deliverance out of them.

Wherein are several Remarkable Instances of the Gracious  
Effects of Fervent Prayer.

The whole drawn up and written by SAMUEL PETTO, Mini-  
ster of the Gospel at *Sudbury* in *Suffolk*, who was an Eye-witness  
of a great part. With a Necessary Preface.

Job 2. 6. *And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold he is in thy hand;  
but save his Life.*

L O N D O N,

Printed for John Harris at the Harrow in the Poultry. 1693.

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Edward Cook.

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## A Preface to the Christian Reader.

**T**HE following Narrative and Letter concerning the Case of Mr. Spatcher, to the Postscript I did draw up many Years ago when the matters were fresh in Memory. I my Self was an Eye-Witness of many of his Fits, and there are others (not a few) yet alive about Walpoole and Cookly who can attest them; So as the matter of Fact hath convincing Evidences, and is undeniable in the Substance of it.

There are Atheistical and Irreligious Persons in this Age, which wou'd perswade us that all such matters are Cheats, or come on'y from a Natural Cause.

If some be Cheats and Counterfeits, must all be so? Surely not. It is not imaginable that this should be a Cheat, for the dispensation was so Stupendous and Terrible, that no Man would Voluntarily have been biassed by Interest, or hired into such a Condition for such a number of Years whatever Worldly advantage could be laid before him.

If some strange Convulsive Motions may be from a Natural Cause, yea even in this Person in part, yet it is Irrational to think that the Principal or chief of his unusual Fits should be reducible thereunto. Men might more probably say, that the sore Boils which Job was smitten with were from a Natural distemper, and not from Satan, Job 2.7.

Many of these Motions were beyond Mr. Spatcher's skill (as his acting the part of a Drummer, a Musician) others were apparently involuntary, even against his own Life, others not only Morally, but Naturally impossible (without Superadded strength) as far transcending his Natural power; which together with the speedy recovery (in a quarter or half an hour after the removal of the Fits) from such Tormenting Wracking Pains by Violent Distorting of Limbs, sufficiently argue its not proceeding meerly from a Natural bodily distemper.

To this I might add what I my self and my Friend Mr. William Bidbank (a Minister) did observe in another Famous Case at Low-stoft; where divers persons (not only Dissenters but also others) had Torturing Fits, and raised or Vomited many Pins, all Wrangled and bent, so as I could not observe two Pins of those which I saw that were bent in the same manner.

Can any imagine that these Pins were from a Natural Cause, engendered in their Bodys and thus bent? and when divers of them had Fits together at the same time, if one recovered and did but go and lay a hand upon the others, they would immediately recover, and be well again. Surely these things may be enough to evince that these things were preternatural.

And

And those Lowstoft Witches had their Tryal before that Renowned, Cautious and Judicious Judge Hale, were found guilty and Executed, and afflicted persons freed, we hope as an answer of Prayer Solemnly made there on the account of the persons before so sorely Visited.

It remaineth then that if those things were not meerly from a Natural Cause, then they must be Diabolical. And in the present instance of Mr. Spatchet, it is unquestionable, it being confessed by the Witch her self.

I would therefore Caution such as are Witch-Advocates to take heed of being incredulous, Mockers and Deriders at such things, lest the Lord leave them to find by sad Experience that there are such wicked Creatures in the World.

If any should stumble at it, that such a good man as Mr. Spatchet, should suffer by the hands of Witches, such Children of the Devil.

Let them know, that God, (for Wise ends) permitted Satan sorely to afflict his Servant Job; a man who had a Testimony from the mouth of God himself, Job 1. 8 and 2. 3. That he was an upright man, one than feared God, and escheweth evil; yea he had a high Encomium, that there was none like him upon the Earth. And if a Godly man may so deeply suffer by the hand of Witches, why may not Satan be permitted to take the shape of a gracious man? may he not do that as well as transform himself into an angel of light? This is the Comfort of Believers, that God doth limit Satan and set bounds to him, that he can hurt them no farther than God will permit him. As to Mr. Spatchets being afflicted after the Death of the Witch; I would answer, he had abatements soon after, and I have been informed that the Witch said before her death, that although she dyed, yet he would not be free, for others had a hand in his trouble, as well as she.

I have been importuned by a Person of Quality and divers others, to permit this Tragical Story to be published, as being seasonable in this juncture of time. I shall be glad if it may be blessed to the awakening of some to seek a freedom from the Dominion of Satan, over their Souls, by observing how he exerciseth his Cruelty upon the Bodys of Men; and also if it may be rendered useful towards exciting us to admire God in Preservation, from such Bodily Sufferings by his Instruments, and for Glorious Victories over his temptations by Jesus Christ; which that it may be shall be the Prayer of him, Who is

June 29. Thine to Serve thee  
1693. in the Gospel,  
SAM. PETTO.



## A Letter to a Friend.

SIR,

**Y**OU are very desirous to obtain a faithful Narrative (a *Capite ad Calcem*) of these wonderful and almost unparallel'd *Fits*, wherewith Mr. Thomas Sparchet was afflicted for some years: I here present it to your view, as a matter that deserveth to be had in remembrance in Ages to come.

I have lived some Miles distant from the place of his abode; but yet coming often thereabouts, I had the advantage to be an Eye-witness of a great part of what you find in this Story, and more I had from his own mouth; for he was always free to declare how it was with him before many Witnesses.

The various passages seemed to me so remarkable, as from time to time I could not but commit them to writing, for a memorial of them; and I suppose some others have done the like, yea many (if they have not yet) might have done it; for this was no private business, but commonly known in this Country.

I submit it to your Judgment, whether all proceeded from a Natural Cause, or a Diabolical.

He still findeth those shatterings in his head (within mentioned) in Religious Duties, at some times, especially if he travelleth beyond his strength.

I shall add no more but this, that the wording of it is not all his, but partly mine, and therefore I must crave excuse for failures therein. I have expressed as clearly as I could those wonderful Works of God, and I am glad I can tell you, that he hath made the latter end, better than the beginning.

Yours,

Samuel Petto.

## A Myfterious Providence.

Chap. I. *Of the Lineage, Birth, and former place of abode of Mr. Thomas Spatchet, together with some remarkable Providences he met with, in Infancy, and afterwards.*

**T**HE purpose and design of this Undertaking is, to give a faithful Narrative and true Relation, of the extraordinary, and almost unparallel'd bodily Afflictions, which (of late years) an *Eminent Servant of Christ* hath been exercised with, by a variety of violent and torturing Fits, *the History* whereof may be admirably useful for the striking conviction and astonishment into the hearts of Sinners, and especially such who are of an Atheistical Spirit, hardly perswaded that there is either a God or a Devil; here they may read of both; *and if this be done to the green Tree, what will be done to the dry?* It may also serve for the *Encouragement and Consolation of True Christians*, who may be exercised in a like condition, and may labour under doubtings and despondency of spirit upon that account, crying out, *No sorrow like our sorrow*; here they may see that one dear to the Lord hath been in a like case or condition: And this also may conduce to the Exaltation to the glorious Name of God, by magnifying his work, in declaring the remarkable *Protections*, and wonderful *Salvations*, which have been vouchsafed to him.

But it may not be amiss to look back and touch upon the foregoing part of his Life.

His Name is *Mr. Thomas Spatchet*; he was born about the midst of the Month of *January 1614* and hath been *Bayliff* twice in that antient Maritime Town of *Dunwich* in the County of *Suffolk*; his Fathers Name was *Mr. James Spatchet*, his Grandfathers Name was *Mr. Robert Spatchet of Dunwich*, who was a very prudent man, and conversed much with *Sir Edward Coke*, late Lord Chief Justice.

*The aforesaid Mr. Thomas Spatchet* is one, whom the special Providence of God hath watched over for good, even from his Childhood.

He had almost a miraculous preservation in his very Infancy; for, being then carried by a Servant carelessly upon her shoulders,  
in



in a Yard set with Stone; she stumbling, he fell over her head, and pitched his head upon a Stone; whereby his Skull was broken, and the wound so deep and dangerous, that the mark is still apparent; there is a great seam to be seen on the left side of his Head, down towards the outside of his Eye, and the upper part of it turneth like a square about the midst of the fore-part of his Head; it seemeth to be two Inches or more both ways. But here the Lord had given his Angels such a charge concerning him, that altho' he dashed his head against a stone, yet he was preserved and kept from this threatned death, and delivered, that he might declare the mighty Works of God.

Afterward when he was between 21, and 22 years of Age; being in a married state, going to a Well (in the same Yard where he had the aforementioned fall) upon occasion to draw Water; the Pully and Bucket falling, he fell with them headlong into the bottom of the Well, which was about 21 yards deep; the Water therein was at that time about knee deep; but the All-wise God so directed his fall, that he missed the bucket, the fatt, and great stones at the bottom (which were afterward seen there) else his brains had been dash'd out; the Lord brought him out of this horrible Pit, and since hath pitched his Soul upon the Rock of Ages.

A Man going down, found him standing on his legs, and fetched him up; but when he came to the Air, he grew very ill, and kept his Bed many days after this his retirement into the Chambers of Death; he having been but a little while in the bowels of the Earth (that whilst he was alive he might have a foretast of the Grave) he hardly knew how to live in the common Air any longer; but the Lord had intendments to make his Power known in his restoration; he had further work for him to do, and more for him to suffer; and therefore altho' the dreadful effects of this fall began now to shew themselves in a *Urin red like blood*, and many other distempers of body, such as at first he could not turn himself in his bed, yet a Vein being opened, and other means us'd, with a Divine blessing thereupon, he so far recovered within the space of a month, as he was able to go a little about the house, and so by degrees returned to a good measure of health again.

It is not to be passed in silence, what mercy was mixt with this sad dispensation, that in this dangerous fall not one of his bones was broken; that hand that held the Rope lost some flesh, almost

to the bone, and he had a hole in his wrist, a range on the forehead, and the skin beaten off his ankles, no other hurt outwardly appearing either in head or elsewhere, the skin not so much as broken, but as aforesaid.

It also deserveth observation that a Woman in the same Town falling into a Well, was taken up alive, but soon died.

Moses in his Boat of Bulrushes being laid by the Rivers brink, was preserved, *Exod. 2. 3.* and this is upon Record for after Ages; and surely the preservation of this Man, in falling into the Waters, with many Instruments of death attending him, deserveth to be had in everlasting remembrance.

Chap. II. *Of his Fits, their beginning and continuance for some time; Benumbing, Shaking, Skipping.*

**I**T pleased the Lord after walking towards him in such a variety of merciful Providences, at last by his Spirit to bring him into a saving acquaintance with himself in his Son Jesus Christ, through the exceeding great and precious Promises of the Gospel; with what brightness the Grace of Christ hath shined forth in his conversation, to the refreshing the bowels of other Christians, is well known to those who have had the advantage to converse with him. For many years such a Gospel-conversation hath been found with him, as (tho' he hath infirmities common to all men and Christians, yet) men who have made the strictest observation thereof, and have pryed into it with the most curious Eye, could not descry any Apostacy or Backsliding; his steps have not visibly declined from the ways of God to this day; yet the Lord (whose ways are in the deep, which doth great things and unsearchable, marvellous things without number *Job 5. 9.*) hath in those latter years shewed him great and sore troubles, led him in unwonted paths, which few have known, tryed him with a variety of strange, if not unpresidented violent Fits, the rise, progress, & end whereof (so far as can be remembred) will be rehearsed in these following lines.

About the month of March 1660. as he was speaking to some, he found a mutation or alteration in his head, causing such a failure either in the use of his understanding, memory or senses (call it what you will) as put him to a stand; he was at a loss, knew not how to go on in speaking what he intended to his friends, but quickly



quickly recover'd again; and not long after (the same day) was at the same loss again, finding a grinding pain round about the crown of his head, near half way downward (as he hath done ever since upon such occasions) it was not violent, but moderate and easie to be born; this to his head hath been answerable to the jarring of the elbow by a blow; much differing always from the ordinary pain of the head, without belching.

*Here was the rise of all the ensuing Tribulations; from so small a beginning, hath sprung all those sublequent troubles which have been astonishing to the beholders.*

I might have noted (once for all) that since, the aforesaid pain hath sometimes lasted two or three hours after he hath been well recovered out of those Fits.

But to proceed, the next day after he was first taken (& since) he was subject to the same distemper, to be at a loss upon speaking; yet went up and down that week, and when he did set about Religious duties, as Prayer, he could go but a little way without faulting and failing therein.

The same spring, he seemed to have inward nippings and smirings in his head, which caused a great amazement and astonishment in him, and hath continued in some degree long since, at times; and hath hindred a free and uninterrupted exercise of his understanding, or rather the use of speech; for it was not so much a failing in perception or apprehension of things, as inability for expression, he knew what he would say, and what others said or did, but could not utter it: he was disabled for proceeding at present in what he would say; so that it seemeth to be rather a failing of speech than of understanding.

*Afterward it brake forth into Fits of two sorts or kinds.*

1. *Benumbing him*, that he could neither stir hand nor foot; nor rise from the seat he sat on, and by and by did flie up; his hands would hang down, he not being able to lift them up; his eyes shut; not able to open them; no breath sometimes perceiv'd to be moving a great while together, yet then knew what others said; his teeth fast set, that it was difficult (if any thing were put into his mouth) to get the spoon either in or out; his nether chap sometimes would fall, as when a man is in a swoond; and then immediately it would come outward: Sometimes these benumbing Fits would continue two or three hours; Then,

2. *A moderate shaking followed* (when it came outward) like a *Palsy*; and then it would proceed to a shaking with violence, first his head, his Body then standing still; then from the Neck to the Middle, his Head that time standing still, after this from the Middle downward shaking in great Violence, and in that time his head and other upper parts would stand still; after this one Leg would shake and no other part; and then his whole Body, Chair and all in Violent Motion.

*Before the shaking fits came, his hands would be lifted up, and cast down upon his knees, beating them for some time.*

*Afterwards his leggs and feet would move with much agility and harmony, in fits striking upon the ground as if in ringing of Bells, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. without Changes, a great while together; sometimes as if in playing in Musick, diverse Musical Tunes, and keeping orderly stops, although he never was acquainted with the Art of Musick, cannot distinguish the Tunes if they be played on Musick Instruments; yet such as were with him in his Fits, and knew the Tunes, were able by their hearing the beating of his Feet to discern his acting the part of a Musician therein: His Feet would strike 7 or 8 times or oftener, one Foot first and than the other answering immediately after, except where the Tune required to have it otherwise, and in ringing, his Feet every stroke had a several place of the ground, in its setting down.*

*Also he hath by the beating of his Feet in his Fits, acted the part of a Drummer, Sounding a Call, a March, a Retreat, &c. Yet he never did Drum, nor doth he know (if he heareth a Drum beat) how to distinguish those each from other.*

*After this, his whole Body hath been often in impetuous motion, his Hands and Feet flying about with great swiftness, with such a variety of Motion as is unexpressible, till he hath sometimes fallen out of his Chair, and if he hath so fallen, although in the height of the Fit, yet it hath presently left him.*

*At first he had but two or three of these fits in a day, then they came to Four in a day constantly, and so continued week by week, and month by month, and when Four in a day, than each of them were two Hours in a day, and sometimes he had half an hours respite between, at other times a quarter of an hour, and it mry be one day in a Month or Five weeks without a Fit.*

*Then they altered from 4 to 5 in a day, and than to 6 or 7 or 8, and*



and so on to 20 or more in a day, but then came to be shorter when more in number, yet in the same manner for actions as aforesaid. After he comming to be tyred out with being in the Chair, he did lie down on a Bed, and rising to come off his Bed, both leggs would go sidewise or not at all, and then his whole Body raised up two Foot, Capering about in the Chamber, till he fell down, and then the fit left him.

Also he had *Skipping or Jumping Fits*, wherein sometimes his Feet being close together his whole Body hath been lifted up, and his Feet from the ground (as hath been said) two Foot or more, sometimes right up & down often at other times hath been lifted up and both his legs carried sidewise at a great distance as if he had jumped, and then back again as far sidewise, thus a great while together till his strength hath failed, and Spirits have been spent, all this time bearing himself upon a strong staff; If he hath been beaten against a Wall, or after his strength hath failed, if a Chair hath been set behind him and he helped into it, then he hath rested there untill he hath been a little revived.

Some Fits did begin first *benumbing him, then shaking, then skipping*, and some of these have lasted 4 some 5, 6 or 7 hours from the beginning to the end, and as some part hath been playing or stamping, so the end hath been with great Violence.

Thus his Fits continued many Months.

In all these things there was occasion to Sing of Mercy and Judgment.

Here is Judgment, not only upon the account of the Terribleness of the Fits themselves which rendered him an Object of Pity and Compassion, to all who were Spectators of him therein, whose hearts were not harder than Flint, but also by an aggravation of this dispensation through *a disablement for Religious exercises which did attend it*. For the first year he had some liberty to wait upon God in Prayer at some times, and could hear the word Preached, afterward could hear but one part of the day, then could hear the Prayer and part of the Sermon, and so by degrees could not hear at all.

Within a year and half or thereabout (after his being first taken with the Fits) he lost his liberty for any such act of Worship; he could not attend upon God in any Religious Services, so much as a quarter of an hour without falling into Benumbing,  
Shaking,

Shaking, and other violent Fits; He could *not* Pray or joyn with others in Prayer, not exercise himself about the word of God, or hear others Preach the word, not crave a Blessing himself before eating his Meat or give thanks after it, nor be present when others acted therein (unless they were very Brief) but presently he was cast into those aforementioned Torturing Fits thereby.

This was such a dark dispensation, as put the Wifest men and those of greatest experience, and understanding in the ways of God to a stand, they were at a loss how to interpret these dealings of God with him; that a man whose heart was so deeply ingaged for God and his Services, should now be incapable of rising up thereunto, or be hindred, *not by a decree of Man, but by the Providence of God.* That he who had been so many years under a new Birth yet should now be thus disabled for crying unto God, that he who had so much of the Spirit of adoption as a Spirit of Prayer, should now be disabled for crying *Abba*, to his Heavenly Father; this was such a Mysterious Providence, so cross to his ordinary proceeding, as it was amazing to the beholders of it.

But *here was Mercy still*, in that when no such Spiritual breathings might be discerned by standers by, yet his Pulse was beating Heaven-ward, in inward workings and groanings of Spirit after God, and in that sedate quiet and chearful frame of Spirit, that was found with him under this stupendious dispensation, which manifested it self, when he had any intermission, that it may be said of him as of Job of old, Job, 1. y. 22. *So in all this he sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.* I might here give some account of his Experience, but I shall defer that a little longer.

There was Mercy not only in sustaining his Soul, but his body also; for so soon as the Fits were off, he could now eat his meat whether the fits were long or short.

Also he had a partial (not a total) freedom from his Fits in the latter end of the year 1662 For the space of near ten weeks, and this was a great Mercy.

### Chap. III. Of other Swingling, and Wringing Fits.

**I**F he were upon his Feet in the time of the moderate shaking, and made any offer to go, *he could go no way but backward*, and so he could go, and hardly keep from running, he could not readily



dily stay himself; if he sought to set a step forward, either his trouble would strike inward and then he should look gashly as a Dead Man (yet not sensible of sickness) his Spirits exceedingly quenched, failing and yielding as when a Man is giving up the Ghost; or else he was necessitated to go sidewise in the manner aforementioned.

Or else he was *Swingled round, round, round*, till he fell down, if none were by him to hold him up. If any attempted to stay him when he was in the said motion, and before he was ready to fall, he so attempting (though a strong man) would also be *swingled round, round*, like a Feather, untill he fell off.

Yet at some times (before *Swingling*) if he would force himself to stand still he could, but if he would go it must be those ways: stirring sometimes to go forward two or three steps, he should be forced as many more backward and sometimes his leggs crossed, thus he hath tryed half an hour together and could not get forward the breadth of a house, but giving liberty to himself then to go backward, he could go with great swiftnes that way. Sometimes lifting up his foot to go streight on, his leg hath been lifted up a great height and must stand there, he could not get it down again whilst one might go near forty paces, this was but seldom, the other often.

In the Winter 1693. then it came to a *Continual shaking like a Palsy* head and body, and not many violent Fits, but shaking all the day long, from the time of his rising, till night six or seven a Clock, and then went off with a sharp shaking Fit.

At the beginning of the shaking he could neither eat nor drink, nor all the day long, till it was off at night about six a Clock; afterward he could eat, if he would walk up and down in the House eating. If he felt those nippings in his head, he must keep it in his Mouth untill the fear and amazement was over, and then chew and swallow it down, and thus by degrees he could eat a Supper; but if he ceased walking and sate down (as many times he did for tryal) by that time he had eaten 8 or 9 Morsels either he could not rise off the Seat he sate on, or could not speak, or else could not keep the Seat, by reason of Violent shaking, and thus it continued about 16 or 17 Weeks.

Some that sympathized with him in this condition, did set some time apart to wait upon God in Prayer, on his behalf, and then

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was there a cessation of these Fits, as an Eminent return of Prayer.

After that for the space of ten days he had a respite, an intermission or breathing time, a little reviving in this Bondage, and then they came to their former course again, as to stamping, shaking and skipping in the usual manner, but not exceeding 8 Fits in a Week, whereas before he had 8 or 10 or 12 or more in a day; this was in the Summer time.

*Afterwards they ceased from shaking Fits, and came to Wringing Fits.* His Hands lying one upon or in another would Wring one out of the other, and then the fore-finger would rise up first, and so the rest one after another, till all met, viz. the Fore-finger of one hand with the fore-finger of the other hand, the Second finger of one hand with the second of the other, and so for the rest; at some times they would be spread abroad finger from finger of the same hand so wide as if one would have been rent from the other. When they were all met as aforesaid, then they would gradually by a slow motion be raised above the Crown of his hat, till his hands clasped both together fast about his Neck, and then were Immovable till they did of their own accord remove, and then they were wrung Backward, and the Palms of his hands turned upward at his Back, and then were carried by degrees under his Arm-holes till they met right behind, and were carried up to his Shoulders, with much Pain and so as a Crashing about the Joynts hath been heard by standers by; these Fits are so Terrible as he felt them a great while after, and doth to this Day: then they were brought back again, the one hand to his Mouth, then to his Eye, and the other stretched out as if he had been shooting in a Bow drawing it to the utmost; after that one hand would be carried right up as high as possible spread open, and the other right down at the same time, till it hath wound about part of the Chair; afterward that which was upward came downward, and that which was downward went upward as before, then sometimes wrung about with various motions unutterable, as if his Arms would have been wrested, rent and torn from his Body.

*After this,* his hands would be still, unless he forced them to his Thighs, and then they would fly out and beat one against another very smartly, and he durst not seek to alter the motion. Or if one hand did at any time get hold of the other, it was so wrung

as



as if it would tear it in pieces; If any did seek to hold him in a Chair (though he were a man of strength) yet he was easily cast off, and it added to his affliction, made it the more fierce if any attempted to stop the Motion.

Above half an hour would these Wringing Fits continue, and all that while no shaking.

When his hands had done, then his head was wrung the one way, and his mouth the other contrary way, the former so far till he did see right behind him, and there stood a Considerable time; then his head would be turned the other way till he saw right behind, and his Mouth not so drawn, and thus backward and forward Five or Six times; after that, his head would be still, and his Body wrung almost off the Chair, and then the Fit ceased. His Legs have some times been drawn under the Foot of the Chair, and there set fast for a Considerable time. Every Day he had one of these Fits.

Some Christian Friends being deeply affected with his Condition, did betake themselves again to Prayer, where he was present, and was in all those Motions; in the time of Prayer he was put upon kneeling down; and did so for some time, and had (as he phraseth it) a Nip in his Head, whereupon he started up, and almost struck one down which stood by, yet the work of Prayer went on. He was then put upon bowing his Body (without pulling off his Hat) and moving his Hand like a great Complimenter, also upon drawing as at a Bow, Skipping, Wringing, and such like, being set on a Chair, endeavoured to gather up his Legs (being turned sidewise) and his Head was Bowed backward, his Mouth strained wide open at such a distance as if his Jaws should have been rent asunder, his Tongue being doubled in his Mouth, his whole Body was hoysed up; being set down again in the Chair, he brake forth into Roaring out in a hideous and Dreadful manner till he was almost spent and like a dying-man, and another while he made a blowing with his Mouth and Nostrils, that the noise thereof was like that of the Smiths Bellows when stirred, which Actions were a great disturbance, yet they went on in seeking the Lord, till he sat still and quietly among them; and although he heard but the sound of the Words, could not give attention or use affection, by reason of his Extremities in his Fits; Yet the Lord appeared here also as a God hearing prayers; and

was intreated by others for him, so far as that from that very day for the space of two and twenty weeks he had a freedom from Shaking, & Wringing fits; only when he hath adventured to joyn with others in Prayer, or such exercises; he hath found such disablement and shatterings as were first mentioned, but enjoyed immunity from those dreadful fits which before he was molested with.

Also he had an enlargement of his *Spiritual Liberty* in some degree from this time; for, whereas for a great while together, he could not read four verses of a Chapter, nor hardly write his own name, without dreadful affrightments and amazements, loss of Speech and other sad symptoms; that Summer and especially since that two and twenty weeks, he hath been able to read either the Scriptures or other Books; sometimes an hour together, and could also write, mostly without weariness.

Before I pass on, I shall briefly hint what the frame of his Spirit, was *as to matter of experience, under these terrible dispensations.*

He was desirous to see friends, but it was a great trouble to him, that when they went about any Religious exercise he must go away, and this hath so affected him, as by the working of his affections he hath been cast into fits.

But the way which the Lord did ordinarily lead his heart in, was to be quiet under his hand, and to submit to his will patiently; leaving him to his own time for deliverance if he saw it good for him, and this he found when he was under the most violent fits: In his greatest extremity there was such a bowedness to the Divine Will, as he could as willingly sit down in the Chair to receive a fit from the hand of the Lord, as rise out of the Chair when it was off.

And the thoughts of that, did often encourage him in his fits, viz.

[ Lord thou knowest when it is enough, and thou knowest when to make a cessation, I leave it unto thee. ]

And sometimes upon the account of *Divine Prerogative*; his heart hath been quieted: he may do with his Creatures what he pleaseth, and there hath been deserved infinitely more. Such hath been the mercy of God towards him, that for the most part his body was more tyred out, than his Spirit. Only twice he found a little working of discontent.

Once he had some fear lest that quiet which he had, should be



be but a carnal quiet, through the carelessness of his own Spirit

It pleased the Lord presently to leave him to some discontent of Spirit about it, and at that time his Fits were not by many degrees so high as formerly or since; this frame continued but a day and a night, and the next morning after the Lord convinced him of the evil of it, that he had been discontented with his hand, when he lay'd it so lightly upon him, in comparison of what he experienced formerly; he saw wisdom, goodness and mercy in God, even in leaving him to be discontented; the Lord turned this to his good and helped him against it, letting him see that contentment cometh from him; it is of the Lord to make a man contented in any Affliction: Content was the Lords and none of his, he could not quiet his own Spirit.

*Another time* after he enjoyed some respite from fits, and God had been often sought concerning it; he found a great unwillingness to come under the yoke again; he considered the manner of the affliction, that God did strike at him in respect of his Ordinances that if he came near where he was worshiped, then he did strike with heavier strokes than at other times; upon the return of his fits after some weeks respite, he had such workings of heart as these; the People of God generally sought the Lord, and he denied Prayer, yea God himself excommunicated and shut him out, it was a dark dispensation.

Immediately after these thoughts he had this as a quiet to his Spirit [wait on the Lord, and wait for God.] It is better to wait for God in the want of a mercy sometimes, than to enjoy a mercy we desire; for while we are waiting upon God for mercy desired we are honouring of God, but while we enjoy mercy desired God is honouring of us.

And this Scripture came to his thought, *Hab. 2. 3. The Vision is for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, wait for it*— Vision is of dark things, these are to be waited for: His unwillingness now was removed, and his heart brought in some measure to wait upon and for God, though it were a dark dispensation, God would give deliverance if he did see it good.

He was wonderfully quieted and made willing to submit to the will of God; and unless these two times he hath not found such discontent, and thus the Lord did help him over it, and his fits returned to their old course again.

Clap.

Chap. IV. < Of other Fits disabling for eating of his meat, and some continuing twelve hours ; also Kneading Fits.

**A**fter the two and twenty weeks of such freedom, his Fits returned again to their former course of Stamping, Shaking, and Skipping, but these fewer in number, and with intermissions, sometimes a fournight together.

For the space of about three weeks he had none of those Fits, unless he did offer to eat his meat, and then he could not get down above four morsels at a time before he should be cast into such a Condition as he could neither stir hand nor foot, nor speak a word for the space of near an hour after, and whilst that hath been in his mouth his jaws have been closed, that his fourth Morsel could neither be brought out or taken down : He could get down no other succour or refreshment during that time, but a little Beer and thin Broath ; so that his body was brought low, and he ready to famish.

Then the Lord was sought unto in that case also, and that very night he could eat 9 or 10 morsels, and the next day he could eat to satisfie his Appetite if he made haste ; but as soon as he had done he fell into fits again of another kind, all parts of his body moved as if one limb would have been plucked from another, his hands in such swift motion as his fingers could hardly be discerned therein ; and so his legs also, looking very gashly ; this lasted a fournight longer, every time that he did eat.

Prayer was made to the most high God as to this particular also, and that very night and from that time forward he could eat his meat without trouble, except as in the next particular.

In the Winter 1665. it came to shake him like a moderate palsy in the head several weeks together : Twelve hours the fit lasted every day ; the shaking fit lasted ten hours daily, and went off with two hours of roaring fits, or howling or barking like a Dog, and his mouth wrung in a dreadful manner, with grievous faces. He hath been so hoarse with these fits as he could not speak to be heard in all that time : He could eat no meat till the 12 hours were ended ; he hath tryed several times, but soon hath been able to eat no more, and hath been in fear that he should be raging mad and fly upon the people, yet never did any hurt.

The



The Lord was sought unto for that also, and he was present till two Prayed, and had four of the Roaring Howling Fits; and from that Day; for the space of ten days he was free from the Shaking and other Fits. Then they came again like a *Palsy* for about 11 Days, then Skipping fits one in a Day, after that he had Roaring fits again, but with intermissions three or four Days, or a fournight.

Also in the aforementioned Roaring fits, as he lay on his Back on the Bed, his Hands and Legs were drawn right upward one Leg against one Arm and Hand, and the other Leg against the other Arm and Hand, and so stood right up for some time, then they would fall down and be raised up again in the same manner, three or four times in a fit, his fingers being stretched so wide as if they would have Parted and been Rent one from another; and at one time when his Hands and Legs were so stretched upwards, at the same time his Body was lifted up from the Bed three or four times, and falling down again upon the Bed, he was acted thus up and down without his putting forth any Natural Power to promote such a Raising up of his Body from the Bed.

Also during the same time as he did lye upon the Bed, his Legs were drawn Backward and gathered up to his Back parts, still his Head being upon the Pillow, then his Head hath been raised forward by degrees to his Knees, and they being met would lye together a little space, and then loosen or part again and the Fit go off.

Also sometimes his Head hath bent backward off the Pillow, and then his Legs have been so gathered up as his Toes stood on the Bed and his Back bent like a Bow, and so they stood for some space of time, the chief stress being upon the feet, Neck, and Back, and then returning back again the fit left him.

Thus when he hath said his Bed should Comfort him, and did lye down for ease, he hath found the contrary, that there they have been as Violent fits, and his Shakings more tedious to bear than if up.

*Also some Fits have kept hours like an Ague* in their coming, that exactly the same hour in which they came this Day, they would come the next Day, and so in after days; he for a diversion hath put himself upon such an exercise of Body and Mind, as might be most likely to put by the thoughts of it; but his fit would

would return the very Hour and Minute as in the former Day, and whatever postures his Arms were found in at that instant; that they were kept in for a Considerable time; as if one Arm were stretched right out, he could not draw it in again, but must stand in that posture a great While.

His disability for attendance upon God in Ordinances. still continued, In the Year 1665. he was so far from joyning with others in acts of Worship, that if he attempted himself to go to Prayer, if he were upon his Knees he had such Smitings in his Head, that he could not without much difficulty raise up his Body; If he stood to Pray, so it was also, his Countenance changed, and he reeled and staggered. and was not able to speak a Word; So likewise if he assayed to do it walking in his Chamber; only he had a liberty for an Ejaculation or two, and at sometimes lifting up his Heart for half a quarter of an hour together; he hath tryed when he hath gone first to Bed, and it was so with him for a great while there also, he could not proceed for these Nipps; But for some Months in that year he was free of these Nipps, being affrighted out of it, *i. e.* Out of Praying work, with dreadful Representations.

For, when he was certainly awake he had diverse times the Apparition of diverse faces, he never knew any of them, but Hers who discovered her self to be a Witch; his freedom from these Terrible Apparitions was also a return of Prayer: and in regard he is apt to conclude a delusion of sense herein, hence I shall not here give any further Particular account of those Apparitions, only as it is necessary in the relating the manner of some following fits; although I understand not how it could any way darken this story. seeing in former Days it hath been a common thing for the Devil to Appear in several shapes: there were such Apparitions, and it is doubtless one precious Priviledge attending the bright shinnings forth of the Glorious Gospel; that since there hath been a greater freedom from these, than in foregoing Ages, and ordinarily *Satan* hath fallen before it like Lightning from Heaven.

But to return to our Story, about this time (1665) When the Lord hath given him any Intermissions or freedoms from his fits, for some days, a night or two before their return again when in Bed, he hath been cast into a heavyness and benumness, as if in a sleep,



sleep, yet not asleep, if any were on the other Chamber, he knew what they said; after that, he hath had a blow as if a punch with the finger, either on his Breast, Side, or shoulder, soon after as if two did strike in the same manner; Presently as if a Hand did smite him, and then *a Kneading on his Side or Breast*, (as if Bread had been kneading there) for some space, untill he hath been Sore, with some Intermission; and then it hath been repeated again in like manner, till he hath seemed to be near Death, and then he hath revived again and come to himself; and for the most part the next Day or the Day after, the Fits have returned again. In these Kneading Fits he hath thrust down his hand and seemed to Catch a Hand, and put it into his Mouth and bite it; at one time he thought it was a Thumb that he did Bite, and it was observed that about the same time, She (that since hath confessed her self to be the Witch) was seen to go with a great shoe, which She borrowed, and her Toe was hurt; when She was Searched since, her Toe was found with an impression as if sawn in; and since that seeming to Bite the Hand that hurt him, for about a Year he was free from that way of Kneading, and since the Fits have been *as if grasped in Arms*, and as handling his back-parts to his great Trouble and affrightment; these were but seldom.

He continued still under a disability to joyn with others in Prayer, or to hear the Preaching of the Word, or to exercise himself unto any deep Meditation ordinarily; but (through the Mercy of the Lord) had more Liberty for ordinary Common Discourse, by many Degrees, than before that time; he could speak about ordinary Matters, but if he attempted to hold on in speaking of the things of God, for Spiritual Edification, he hath by his fits been hindered, unless occasionally, and that very seldom, by the Mighty Power of God, he hath enjoyed that Liberty.

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Chap. V. Of a Witch Confessing privately her Guiltiness, and Testimony offered before others, yet nothing done against Her.

**A** Bout the Month October, or November, (If I mistake not) 1665. He informed me what here followeth in this Chapter. Abre Grinset, alias Thrower, (for she was a Bastard) did

D

Confess

Confess to *E. C.* That She had been Instrumental to Afflict this man *Mr. Spatcher*, and many more. She Confessed but little as yet; and therefore some set a time apart to seek the Lord, that He would cause her to Confess more; and there was a manifest answer of Prayer; for the same day, when they were Praying, or that Evening, of Her own accord She said to those in the House, that She would not tell them all.

And then She Confessed, that She had made a league with the Devil, and was inticed to it by a Witch at a Wedding, that She had been a Witch above Twenty Years; and She had Bewitched *John Collet* of Cookly, and *Henry Winson* of Walpoole to Death; and She must see *John Collet* before his Death, and by a wile did get a sight of him, calling at the House, said that there was the greatest Snake in the way that ever was seen, (which was not so) they all run out to see it, and She in the interim went up to see him, and he Dyed two days after or thereabouts. Also She Confessed to them, that the Devil had drawn Blood of her, and that he did appear in the form of a Pretty handsome Young Man first, and spake to her with a hollow Solemn Voice, but She would not declare what he spake; and since Appeareth to her in the form of a blackish Gray Cat or Kitling, that it sucketh of a Tett (which Searchers since saw in the place She mentioned) and hath drawn Blood.

After this, *Mr. Spatcher* spake with her, and did seriously and solemnly charge her as in the presence of God, that She would speak the Truth, that if She were not such a one, She should not own it, and if She were, then not to deny it, for God would bring it to light.

She answered, that She must Confess the Devil had beguiled her, and that She had been a Witch above 20 years, that She had made an agreement with the Devil, and She thought the time was near out; she declared also as before, how She became a Witch, and in what shape her Imp (which She imployed) appeared to her, and such like.

He asked her whether She had imployed her Imp to him, and why She did it?

She Confessed that She had sent it to him and said that She did bear him no Ill-will, but it was against her Will, She could not help it, the Devil would let her be at no quiet till She had done it;



it; adding, that he never did her hurt, but had been loving and kind to her, in giving her Money ( for She was Poor ) but She was the worse to him.

He speaking to her about his biting, in the aforementioned Kneading Fits; She said that he had bitten too hard sometimes. She said, if it were possible She would never send her Imp to him again, adding, O that I could not, it would be happy for you, and more Happy for me.

When She would have Confessed more to him, She was stoped in her Throat and could not, saying if She could tell all, there might be Mercy for her.

She also said, if She were to be Hanged presently She had no Hand in his Roaring Fits.

Some Women Searched her and found the Tett She spake of, and her Body then Whole; but searching a second time a few Days after, her Body was well nigh all over as if scratched with briars and thorns, the like hath not been seen; & one that searched before saw this alteration: it is probable the Devil did much torment her after her Confession, for those that lived in the same House, heard a very great rumbling noise; also She was gone divers Nights and was seen, Wandring abroad in distant places.

She was also called before other Gentlemen, and some Credible Persons offered to give Testimony of many things aforementioned, as of her free and Voluntary Confessing, that She had a Familiar Spirit, and that She had been the Death of some &c. Some Depositions were taken; but one standing up said,

That if the Bewitched none but *Sparcker*, and *Manning*, and such as they are, She should never be Hanged by him.

And thus notwithstanding what could be witnessed against her, yet she was sent home and nothing in point of Law was done against Her.

Neither can any excuse the matter by saying that in Distemper of body she knew not what she said, the contrary was clear to those that conversed with her; and was also evident; for being asked a question, and the same question being put to her a considerable time after, she could answer as before; and therefore she well knew what she said.

After this time two Gentlemen questioned with her, and she confessed to them the same things. the manner of her becoming a

Witch and her hurting Mr. Spatchet, but was not so ready to confess her being the death of those men afore-mentioned, and grew hardned to deny some things before acknowledged.

It could not (one would think) but deeply affect this poor man, and procure much inward disquietment, to see that his case, and such a case should be so disregarded by men, but still he encouraged himself in the Lord his God; and soon after (if not the next day) reading by course (for now he had liberty to read) that in *Eccles. 5. v. 8. If thou seest the oppression of the poor, and violent perverting of judgment and justice in a Province, marvel not at the matter, for he that is higher than the highest regardeth, and there be higher than they.* This did wonderfully relieve him, as to their actings, he had nothing to do against them, this was enough to him, he could say, thou Lord regardest it, though these men regard nothing of it, and his heart was wonderfully quieted herein.

Some excited him to scratch the Witch or such like, but he had no disposition to it, his heart was so tender that he durst not do it, though his fits continued; that Scripture helped him, *Prov. 20. 22. Say not thou, I will recompense evil; but wait on the Lord and he shall save thee.* He was enabled to wait on the Lord for his Salvation; and that, *Deut. 32. v. 35, 39, 41. It was enough to him that their foot shall slide in due time, and their calamity maketh haste; if there be any such means of his affliction as by Witches, yet vengeance was Gods, and he would recompense any that oppress or abuse his People.*

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Chap. VI. *Of his Dumb fits, also of Shackling and other fits; especially hindring him in travelling.*

**F**OR some months he had *Dumb Fits*, if he hath been well in the house, yet attempting to go out to visit friends, before he had gone the length of one Close or Field, he was struck Dumb, and hath remained so all the day, being necessitated to return back again to his house, where he could either sit or walk but was speechless; these would go off and speech return ordinarily (yet not always) without any violent motion; these were not every day.

In some part of the time he had a moderate shaking like a Pal-sie, all the day long, from the time of his rising till a quarter of an hour after he was laid in his bed, and then it would cease, and



and then he could ſpeak ; If he leaned his head againſt any thing, then immediately his ſpeech was gone, nor could he move his head from the place; nor raiſe himſelf on the ſeat whereon he ſate, till it was pulled away, or they did give him Tobacco ; and then it would go into outward ſhaking again.

He had the uſe of his ſenſes in this time, knew what they about him ſaid and did.

In thoſe years 1665 and 1666 he had *Roaring Fits*, his mouth being ſtretched open, and ſuch violent Fits, and thoſe which hindred travel were ſuperadded.

Sometimes he had liberty to walk in the houſe or yards, but if he attempted to go into the Field, then before coming half way in it, his feet would be as if they were nailed to the ground ; that by all means he could uſe, he could not remove them thence for a conſiderable time, nor get any further to any Friends houſe that he intended to go unto ; he finding this coming, was neceſſitated timely to turn himſelf, and then could ſholving remove one foot firſt about an Inch, and muſt ſtand there till one might have gone a quarter or half way in the Cloſe, and then could remove the other foot an Inch, and ſo each removal at ſuch a diſtance of time, if it were plain ground it was the better, but it was very tedious to him to aſcend or go up when he came at a Hill or Aſcent.

And thus he muſt move home again if none brought a Chair to him to ſit down in till he revived ; theſe Fits went off without ſhaking or other violent motion, and he remained in the former poſture, till he attempted to travel again.

In ſome of thoſe fits reſting, ſometimes on a ſuddain one leg would be forced over the other the full reach, and ſo he muſt ſtand croſs legged; but by degrees with great trouble it would be gotten back again to the other foot, and with much difficulty get over it, which done, preſently even the ſame inſtant, the other foot was ſtruck croſs the full reach alſo, and muſt ſtand till by degrees that alſo was gathered up and then he ſtood in the old poſture, as if faſtned to the ground ; on a ſuddain he ſhould have liberty to go as far as from one ſide of the houſe to the other, and then his feet were fixed to the ground again; after that he had a liberty to go a few ſteps further, then at the ſame paſs again, till at laſt he did get into the houſe.

*After*

*After these fits ceased, if he attempted to travel, he should soon be buckled, his knees bowing as if he were to sit down; and if he offered to right up himself, then he was buckled twice as much, so he must return home in that posture, bearing on his toes only; and so he could travel thus bowed down, but if he offered to raise up his Body, then he could not stay himself but fell to the ground, and rising up after a little time revived; but if he offered to go again a few rod, he was buckled and bowed down as before.*

Sometimes two men have been present when he has been in these Fits, and they fearing he should fall, would take hold of his Arms to raise him, and not the strength of both of them could keep him up, but then he must down to the ground; all they could do was not enough to prevent it, else he did never fall down in these fits, which continued a long time, a year at least as is supposed, but with some intermissions, for nine days or a fournight; in which time he had liberty to visit friends, but then the fits returned again: They continued sometimes twenty two weeks, sometimes thirteen, or nine, more or less.

*Afterward complaining to friends that he could not go; then for some time, if he assayed to travel, his heels were lifted up from the ground and he was forced to stand on his toes, leaning on his staff, and if he would stand still; then he found no shaking, or other violent motion; but if he offered to go, then his feet were violently moved forward running upon his toes, till by his strong staff or by a Tree he did get a stay or stop, and a little revived: and then he was carried violently again, running on his toes as before, till a new stop; these running Fits lasted some weeks.*

*Afterward being freed of these, if he would travel, his strength was taken away; he found an utter disability in all parts, he might stand still, and could not readily get back again; but suddenly he fell to his knees, and and resting on them for a season, then he could rise up and go a little way, and suddenly down again to his knees and no further, these Fits did not hold long, a month or thereabouts.*

*Also in these last years, sometimes his hands have been turned behind him, the palms upward on his back, and his body being bowed*



bowed low toward one side, his face turned upward; he hath been *hurled round, round, round*, in the yard till at the door, and then being helped into the house, was caused to sit in a Chair.

In such a condition he remained untill the death of that Woman which confessed her self to be a Witch, with fits of one kind or another above mentioned.

And the two last years before her death, he had no liberty either to Pray or to joyn with others in Prayer, or other Religious exercises more than is before expressed.

Also, when some have said they could believe for his full freedom, he had not such a Faith, but in the time of his fits he hath earnestly desired of God (as he was able) that he would raise his Soul into a Faith about deliverance with submission to his Will, and if it were his pleasure, that he would give him a perswasion that he should be delivered.

When he hath thus done he found his heart wonderfully over-powered, and carried out this way; *leave it to God, commit all to him, be quiet in the will of God, and let him alone till his time cometh.* Neither was there any thing of Faith further this way, near the deliverance than before, but that if the Lord saw it for his own Glory he would deliver him.

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Chap. VII. *Of things of more general observation in the time of his Fits, and not Limited to any particular one, but Common to more.*

**T**Here were some things remarkable in the foregoing years, which cannot well be confined to any particular fits, which I shall here take notice of.

I. *The working of his distemper upon his acting, or joyning with others in Religious Exercises as Prayer or such like; hath been in this manner.*

Either he hath found a failure of Spirits which did leave him in a great confusion, strammer and amazement; yet he did not loose his senses hereby, he knew any person present, or any thing that was spoken or done to him, and how it was with himself; he had no loss of apprehension but of expression, so that endeavouring to speak would help forward his amazement and affrightment.

Or

Or he found it contrary *viz.* an amazement and affrightment, caused by a working in the Crown of his Head, and a Failing of Spirits following that; this working in his Head was above a third part of the way from the Crown, downward round about, and when ever that came presently a failure of Spirits followed, as if his very Life would have gone away; he felt such a quenching of Spirits that he knew not how to subsist, Yet felt no Pain till the amazement was over, and then found it only in that part of his Head where the Working was, and not elsewhere.

When he hath imployed his mind with much earnestness about any Civil Business, as Writing and Inditeing any matter, he could continue far longer herein, without such shatterings, than in hearing a Sermon or such Religious Exercises; thus it hath been in latter times, but in the former years of his Fits he could not act in either. So in making up of accounts or reckonings he hath found some shatterings, yet could recover, get into his Work again and accomplish it.

Whereas if he continued Religious Exercise, till the beginning of failures of spirit, then if he set himself to regard and attend to what was next to be spoken, he knew it, but should take up the next following sentence and either lose it immediately, or else speak that many times over till he lost it, and if he stayed to hear an other sentence he would go over and over with that also as before.

Also under these failing of Spirits, and Workings of Head, there was a Manifest Change in his Countenance, Staring with his Eyes, like one affrighted, and a Paleness in his Face during this astonishment, a great alteration in the fetching of his Wind, it was very deep with Haling and Blowing. In an Instant his Spirits were quenched, and in an Instant revived again; and then immediately his former Countenance and strength did return again, not gradually as it is in failing of Spirits by sickness, but on a suddain.

2. When he hath been under Torturing Fits, till Nature hath seemed even spent, and he hath stretched out all Parts like a Dead-man, yet after a quarter of an hour or little more, he hath recovered, walked in the House and been Cheerly again and well; only hath found soreness or Weariness after such tossings; yea could eat his Meat and go abroad (unless when his Fits were such as hindred Eating or Traveling) or if he hath been at a Friends House



House, he could soon return home again ; Whereas standers by have thought he could not have recovered or stirred all the Day ; This was by the upholding hand of God, beyond what is ordinarily found where the Body hath been spent by Natural Distempers.

Also when he had many weary days spent with Violent Fits, yet ( through the Mercy of the Lord ) he hath rested very well all the Night, and hath been much refreshed by the Morning, yet within a quarter of an hour after awaking ( when that was the ordinary time for the Fits to come, as when they kept hours like an *Ague* ) he hath found a return of them in Bed before he did arise, and there hath had them in such Violence, that the very Bed and Chamber hath shaken ; Here the Lord did vouchsafe great favour to him, in affording the Comfortable rest of the Night, when yet his Bed was not his freedom ; it was only the Work of God to give him sleep.

3. In any of his Fits, Numb, Dumb, Palsy, Convulsive at the worst, yet he was so far sensible, as he knew every Motion of his own Hands or Feet, every Noise, when Hallowing, when Howling, when Barking, at the time his Mouth was about to be opened, he knew what it would come to, and sometimes did to his Power oppose it, hath gotten his Mouth together to stop it, but it would be forced open in a Dreadfull manner : he knew what he should have done and could not, as when he should step forward and could not ; he knew what he did, and what others did, or said to him or one to another.

In his Roaring Fits he had no Pain to cause him to Roar, but it was a forced action ; the Violence of Fits caused Pain or foreness, but no Pain felt caused any such crying out.

4. In all these Afflictions and violent Motions of Body, he Sustained no Damage or Hurt, unless once or twice beating the skin off his Finger and Ankle ; he hath been in Fits abroad, yet in any of them hath not fallen down but once ( unless as aforementioned as when any Crossed the Motion ) and then falling in a yard, his Body rowled till it came to the side of the House ; but neither then nor at other times did he receive any prejudice more than was aforementioned.

5. Often in Praying times where he hath been present, and Occasion hath been to mention the Devil, and it hath been asked

E

that

that if it were by *Satan* (before it was discovered) that *God* would rebuke him; he hath found hereat a grinding of Teeth, and such an alteration as if the Devil himself would oppose what was spoken.

6. He often made observation that in the Old of the Moon, he hath been ordinarily worse than either in the New or Full Moon. Also he hath observed that in the former and latter Spring he hath enjoyed the greatest freedom from his Fits, as in the Months called *March* and *April*, and also sometimes in *February*, and so about *September* and *October*, and when the Weather did grow cold then his Fits usually returned.

7. Ordinarily after taking *Physick* he was the worse; often *Physick* did greatly increase the Violence of his Fits, all the time of his taking it, and after ceasing to take, they would return to the posture they were in before.

About two years before the Violent Fits left him, he had some respite from Fits for several Days before he began with *Physick*, and the first Day wherein he took it he had a Fit, and so one Fit every Day that he was taking, till it came to the last Dose, which (upon some occasion) he deferred, and that Day of omission he had no Fit, the Day following he did take it, and then had a Fit, and so having finished it he had no Fits for some time.

He desisted taking *Physick* almost two years before his Violent Fits ceased, and yet the last Fits were very Violent.

One Professing *Physick*, observed him in his Fits, and concluded it was no ordinary Contraction of Nerves, but a continual Motion sometimes of all parts, Arms, Hands, Legs, Feet, first stamping his feet, beating upon the ground very swiftly and strongly, at a great distance each from other; his Arms at the same time flying out with a swift and Violent Motion, inward and outward all at once as fast as may be, for a considerable time together, till at last the Fit went off, leaving him sometimes stretched out like a Dead-man.

Yet in all the time of his Fits (when he could Eat his Meat) there was not any abatement or Consumption of his flesh perceived, no Pining away, though there was some Weakness of Body by them.



Chap. VIII. *Of his Fits a little before and at the Death of the Witch, and his gradual freedom since, with his Condition at Present.*

**H**IS Violent Fits continued until the *Thirteenth Day* of the Month of *February*, 1667. and from that Day he hath been freed from them, which was about 8 weeks before the Death of that Woman which Confessed her self to be a Witch, for she Dyed about *April*, 1667. before this 8 Weeks she was under Tortures from the Devil, and whether she had no leisure to send to and Afflict him, or whether it were only from God, laying a restraint upon that grand Enemy of Mankind Satan. that he enjoyed this Eight Weeks freedom from those Fits, must be left to others to Judge: it is good to ascribe all to God; but it being thus long before her Death, this argueth that it was no Corroboration of his Imagination by her Death that was the Cause of his freedom.

Indeed, he had not a freedom from all Fits so early, he was under a Restraint from Travel until the very time of Her Death.

About a Week before she Dyed, *Mr. R.* (a Conformist) sent for him to go to her, when she was Ill; he went about a Close length, and then, if it had been upon his Life, he could not get one step further forward; he indeavoured very earnestly to go on but could not; he did get back again in a long time and with much difficulty; and was forced to make many Courtesies (like Women) all the way back again, with many other like actions which were unavoidable.

*Mr. R.* Went to her without him, and came to *Mr. Spatchet* saying, he never saw such a Spectacle: for all the Skin of her Hands and Arms was scratched or torn off, hardly one place appeared whole as big as his Finger.

She would not Confess to him any thing of Witchery, but only this; *That She had made an agreement with the Devil, and it was now too late for Her to Repent; for she was Damned, or to this Effect she spake.*

She had two Cudgels lay on her Bed, and he asked her what she did with those.

She answerd, she had them there to Fight with the Devil, he did so misuse her.

She was there alone, and he dragged her out of the Bed, and under the Bed : they below, hearing such a Noise, and knowing there was no Body with her, they went up and she was Bloody ; she Confessed to them it was the Devil that came to her. So she Dyed near the time called *Easter*, 1667.

Mr. *Spatchet* was under restraint for travel at the time of her Death, and possessed with some fear that he should so continue until his Death, because he was so at her Death, and nothing done to her to bring her to Justice. He had not any Imagination that he should then have freedom, but rather limited the Holy One of *Israel* by thinking the contrary.

Also she had said to some persons before her Death, that if she Dyed, yet Mr. *Spatchet* should not be fully Free, for others had him in hand as well as she.

But yet the same Week that she Dyed, and the next time after when he attempted to visit Friends, he found a liberty for Travel ; and hath enjoyed that freedom ever since, viz. for the space of above two Years.

Thus Gods thoughts were not as his thoughts, Divine Mercies did surpass his Faith.

And yet the Lord would have it known to be his Work ; his will was the determining rule how far deliverance should be afforded ; it was not all at once but gradually, for although he had then a freedom from Violent Fits, and such as hindered travel ; Yet, *immediately after the Death of that Woman* he had no Liberty for Religious Exercises, either to perform them himself, or to joyn with others therein : he remained without that freedom until the latter end of the *September* following, (which was almost half a Year) and then only *Mentally* ; he tryed after her Death (as well as often before) *Vocally to Pray*, and could not, either alone or with others ; but at the end of *September*, 1667. he could *Mentally Pray* a quarter of an hour together or more daily, with Invention as clear, and Affection raised as high as ever before he had Fits ; and he had no disturbance.

And because he found such a freedom that way, after some time he would try to express it, and when he did so, though he did it with a whispering Voice, yet he had not spoken usually



Twenty words before he found a shattering in his head, so as he was utterly disabled for Invention of Expression, and for a time could not rise up from his Knees, in case he were Kneeling.

After this he would Pray Mentally, and still before the ending would try to utter words, but found it as before, lost his speech and Invention, and reeled and staggered about the Room, yet even when he was worst of all this way, he knew how it was with him.

Thus he continued until the first Day of the Month of *January* following, when meeting with a rebuke; one blaming him for what was his Duty, and reflecting that as the cause of his great Affliction; though probably there was not any other cause than Divine Sovereignty for Tryals sake.

And as if the Lord would witness against such undue reflections upon this Holy Man; he returning home, the Lord was pleased that very Night (after he met with that rebuke) to give him a Liberty by himself Vocally to Pray; he had tryed the Morning before and could not.

But it was only by himself, he could Pray before others, but if they desired it, and he did adventure; then that very night after he had Prayed before others, he lost his Liberty of Praying by himself, and had no Liberty that way nor with others for the space of a Week.

And then at the Weeks end he had Liberty again Vocally by himself, and so continued till he did Pray again with others, and if it were but with one on a sick Bed, or with more, it was all a Case, he lost his Liberty by it for a Week or a fortnight as before.

Thus he continued until *November 5. 1668.* and that very Night he had a Liberty to hear one Pray; although he had tryed the Lords Day before to hear a Sermon repeated, and could not, yet now he could.

And the same Person that was the last he had Liberty to Pray with, before his Fits disabled him, was the First that he had Liberty to Pray with, when his Fits left him: and at the same Persons House was his First Liberty to hear one Pray, and also to Pray before others, and not lose the Liberty himself.

The next Day he Prayed in the Family, and did not lose his Liberty by it then, nor at any time since.

Only

Only, if his head faileth by hearing others exercise, then sometimes he loseth his liberty of praying by himself. or with others exactly for a week, and then it returneth again.

He findeth less liberty to hear others exercise than to pray himself. He can hear a Sermon if he doth not hear the Prayer before, and sometimes can hear both Sermon and Prayer, but that is seldom.

In case he adventureth, usually he findeth a great distemper, disturbance and shattering in his head, which unsitteth him for any service till it be over; it is sometimes procured not only by Religious, but other actings, as he hath attempted often to ride on horse-back since his freedom from Fits, but cannot: Even in the month called *May* 1669. He tryed, but he found that he lost all his strength, could neither go, stand, nor speak, nor so much as hold a stick in his hand; but was in a confusion, his head much disturbed by the motion of the horse, yet had a knowledge of all things done or said at this time.

And it is to be noted, that since his Fits have left him, he findeth no alteration in his body, as to working of humours any other ways more than formerly when he was under Fits or before: Only findeth some decay of strength by reason of Age, yet he hath more strength now than he had in the time of his Fits.

And this is the true account of his Condition both formerly and at present 1669. Whereby it may be seen that he injoyeth a wonderful Salvation from the Lord, which all that have waited upon God in prayer on his behalf, are to own him in, although (it be but partial not total.) There be some remainders of bodily distempers, yet there is great cause to sing forth the high praises of God in all the Assemblies of the Saints, and to say, What hath God wrought?

It is a mercy that hath been waited for, prayed for, and believed for, by many Christians, and now the Lord expecteth the tribute of praises.

As for Mr. *Spatchet* himself, he is desirous to glorifie God by offering up praises to him.

When he had been many weeks under great tossings formerly, so as it was a rare thing in six or seven weeks to have one days intermission,



intermission, yet when he had that short breathing, he was quieted, and did not so much make account of liberty, as earnestly beg of God a preparation of heart for what was behind; and so when he had ten days, or a fortnight, or a months liberty, the Lord did then put him upon begging a submissive frame of heart for what was yet coming.

Whereas since the death of that Woman, and his freedom that did insue, he is less begging submission, but more praising God for what he hath afforded, and begging an improving Spirit of that freedom.

It is true, he had not an absolute and firm perswasion of deliverance before it came, but at sometimes was not without Faith about it, yet submitting it to the Divine Will. That Scripture was a wonderful stay to his heart, and a great encouragement to believe, *Rom. 16. v. 20. The God of Peace shall tread Satan under your feet shortly.* And that also of *Aeneas*, who kept his bed eight years, and was sick of the Palsie, *Act 9. v. 33. Peter said unto him, v. 34. Aeneas, Jesus Christ maketh thee whole.* And indeed this man was eight years and a little more under this Tryal, and sometimes as if he had been in Palsie Fits, but at last Jesus Christ hath in some measure made him whole.

Indeed it was gradually and not all at once; thus of old, the Lord said to the Children of *Israel* concerning the *Canaanite* and the *Hittite*. *Exod. 23. v. 29. I will not drive them out from before thee in one year—v. 30. By little and little I will drive them out from before thee, until thou be increased—*So the Lord would not drive out this mans Distempers in one year, but by little and little; and it is hopeful his design was, that Spiritually he might the more fructifie and increase to the advancement of his glorious Grace through our Lord Jesus Christ.

F I N I S.

## A Postscript.

**I** Lately Converſed with a near Relation of M. Spatchet, with whom he lived after the time of the foregoing Narrative, until he Dyed, who informed me that he had Fits to the laſt, Shaking his Head, and other Limbs, but not frequently, ſometimes many weeks without; yet ordinarily could not Pray or Joyn with others in Prayer. And thus he continued till his Death.

## ERRATA.

**P**age 2. Line 20. read *Exaltation* of, p. 9. l. 14. for *ſtirring*,  
r. *ſtriving*, l. 23. for 1693. r. 1663. p. 10. l. 25. for *are* r. *were*.

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## Adverſement.

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